



# CPSC Safety Alert

## Surviving the Aftermath of a Hurricane

Deadly dangers can exist after a natural disaster knocks out power or causes flooding. Here is some important safety information to keep in mind.

- Never use a portable generator indoors - including garages, basements, crawlspaces and sheds - even with ventilation. Exhaust fumes contain extremely high levels of carbon monoxide (CO) that can rapidly become deadly if inhaled.
- Use portable generators outdoors at least 20 feet away from the home. Wait for the rain to pass before using a generator. Consumer-grade generators are not weatherproof and can pose the risk of electrocution and shock when used in wet conditions.
- If using a portable generator, plug individual appliances into heavy duty, outdoor-rated extension cords and plug the cords into the generator.
- Check that the extension cords have a wire gauge adequate for the appliance loads and have all three prongs, including a grounding pin.
- Never store gasoline in the home or near a fuel-burning appliance, such as a natural gas water heater, where gasoline fumes could be ignited.
- Never use charcoal indoors. Burning charcoal in an enclosed space can produce lethal levels of carbon monoxide.
- Make sure the batteries in your smoke alarm and carbon monoxide alarms are working.
- Do not use electric or gas appliances that have been wet or damaged because of the hazards of electric shock, fire or explosion.



- Exercise caution when using candles. Use flashlights instead. If you must use candles, do not burn them on or near anything that can catch fire. Never leave burning candles unattended. Extinguish candles when you leave the room.

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